

Professional Military Ethics Education and Core Character Values in the Joint Profession of Arms
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: Professional Military Ethics Education and Core Character Values in the Joint Profession of Arms

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Thesis: If America's armed forces espouse a joint profession of arms, then not only should there be mandatory ethics education and training within the respective services, there should also be an overarching "joint" approach to professional military ethics and moral conduct education as well as an established joint code of ethics or essential core character values.

Background: Since 1990, the United States, and especially its military, has been faced with many situations that raise questions about the effectiveness of, and approach toward, ethics education. The leadership in today's military recognizes a need to focus on ethics education and character development from the most junior private to the most senior general. This research effort supports a concept of joint professional military ethics (PME) education and proposes an all-encompassing set of Joint Service Core Character Values. If military officers are going to be held to a higher standard than society, then there should be a clear set of standards to guide their performance and conduct. Not only should military officers be held to a higher standard than society because of their awesome responsibilities, but they should also be afforded the opportunity to recover from an ethical or character related mistake by accepting responsibility, being held accountable, and regaining lost credibility. In order to be successful in the pursuit of jointness, proficiency and professionalism in all aspects of military performance is essential. One aspect, that of ethical behavior and moral conduct, is clearly a necessary element in terms of ultimate success. By endorsing a joint concept for PME education and establishing a set of Joint Service Core Character Values focused on the military profession, the U.S. Armed Forces can significantly close the gap toward becoming a true **joint profession of arms**. When addressed in total, the proposed core character values coupled with the respective service approaches provide military leaders an effective framework with which to address the ethical issues of tomorrow.

Recommendation: If one accepts the premise that jointness is the future of U.S. military operations and that this entails a joint profession of arms, then a joint set of overarching core character values is indeed necessary. As a profession, not only are there certain educational requirements that must be met, but there needs to be a formally published set of standards that govern the conduct of its members. True jointness cannot be achieved without a common focus on PME education and the very basic defining standards of the military profession. The values of **honor, courage, commitment, and duty**, should be established and directed by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the guiding **Joint Service Core Character Values**.

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FORWARD

When beginning this research endeavor, I had no idea of the depth and breadth of material already written on the subject of morality and ethics, let alone, professional military ethics and professional codes. The timeliness of this project, given the current climate within the U.S. Armed Forces leadership, as they grapple with these intrinsic issues that strike at the very essence of the military's role in American society and abroad, is purely coincidental. With over twenty years of active service in the U.S. Marine Corps, I have had the opportunity to experience or witness virtually every kind of mistake a person can make, both "honest" ones as well as those of a moral or ethical nature. The chance to pursue a Master's in Military Studies while simultaneously researching issues that are personally meaningful and rewarding, not to mention being essential to the very fabric of the military culture, was an opportunity I could not pass up.

Although the focus of this effort is confined to supporting the need for joint professional military ethics education along with proposing a set of Joint Service Core Character Values, the two issues chosen to frame the research present much broader implications. With media, public, and even congressional attention directed to civil-military relations, the question of whether the military officer should be held to a higher standard than society seems more pertinent than ever. This, coupled with the view of the Commandant of the Marine Corps that officers (or other Marines) who err in judgment of an ethical nature have forever lost their moral authority to lead, serve as key reasons for needing a joint concept for professional military ethics education. Each service has its own unique spirit and ethos which is taught to all members from assessment to retirement. As the U.S. profession of arms matures and moves closer to a joint culture necessitated by evolving threat situations and the forever shrinking

bank account and personnel rosters, the need to clearly articulate a set of character guidelines or Joint Service Core Character Values, has never been more imperative.

My pride in owning the title *Marine* has been the impetus to focus on ethics. The Marines have maintained a reputation that, according to Lieutenant General Victor H. Krulak, USMC (Ret.), through "fidelity, resourcefulness, courage, and willingness to sacrifice on land, sea, and in the air, created not just a distinguished Corps but a national institution." This lead-from-the-front, take charge, gung ho mentality is precisely why the Marines should be at the forefront of the joint ethics move. By taking the point position, the Marines should be able to not only influence the decision to establish joint direction on professional military ethics education, but to lucidly pronounce a set of Joint Service Core Character Values that emphasize the joint profession of arms and in no way diminishes the essence of our "national institution."

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	vi
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Chapter	Page
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. BACKGROUND	6
Establishing an Ethical and Moral Framework	6
Ethics, Morals: There is a Difference	7
Ethics, Morals, the Armed Forces and the Joint Environment	11
3. PROFESSIONAL ETHICS: SERVICE AND OFFICERSHIP	13
Professions and Professional Codes	13
Military Professionalism	14
Challenges to the Military Profession	17
Professional Ethics Codes	19
4. THE SERVICES' APPROACHES	21
The U.S. Marine Corps and U. S. Navy	22
The U.S. Army's Seven Inherent Values	25
U.S. Air Force	26
U.S. Coast Guard	27
What is in a Word?	29
5. JOINT PROFESSION OF ARMS FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM	32

Why Joint Ethics?	32
Responsibility, Accountability, and Credibility	41
6. CONCLUSION	46
Higher Standard for Military Officers	46
Errors in Judgment...Character Development	47
Joint PME Education and Joint Core Character Values	48
Additional Issues Recommended for Future Study	50
Appendix	52
Bibliography	64

LIST OF TABLES

Table	
Page	
1. The Moral Virtues	9
2. U.S. Marine Corps Core Values	22
3. U.S. Navy Core Values	24
4. U.S. Air Force Core Values	27
5. U.S. Coast Guard Core Values	28
6. Service Core Values Comparison	31
7. Joint Service Core Character Values (Proposal)	35

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since 1990, the United States, and especially its military, has been portrayed as "losing her moral bearings."¹ Terms, phrases and names such as Tailhook, midshipman cheating on exams, cadets violating the honor code, U.S. Air Force General Joseph Ralston, and First Lieutenant Kelly Flinn, have all been examples of how the media--and consequently many Americans--view the U.S. Armed Forces. On the other hand, many Americans view the Armed Forces through the images of U.S. Air Force Captain Scot O'Grady and the joint services effort that saved him. Although many military personnel will point a finger at the news media and blame them with sensationalism and military bashing, the fact remains that the leadership in today's military recognizes a need to focus on ethics education and character development from the most junior private to the most senior general.

There is a sense today that America's societal values are at odds with those values "indispensable" to the "military environment."² Fortunately, U.S. military service chiefs and other key leaders are not only aware of this perception, but are taking positive steps toward

¹ Charles R. Larson, Admiral, U.S. Navy, "Character Development and Professional Ethics: Keys to a Well-Trained Force," *Joint Services Conference on Professional Ethics (JSCOPE)*, Keynote Address, Washington, D.C., 25 January 1996, downloaded from *Sprynet*, (<http://www.nadn.navy.mil/CharacterDevelopment/jscope96.html>), 4 September 1997.

² *Ibid.*

dealing with this insidious foe. One such remedy is to ensure a "cradle (junior) to grave (senior), building block approach" to ethics within the respective services.³

As America moves toward a new millennium, the recognized key to military success is "a joint force--persuasive in peace, decisive in war, preeminent in any form of conflict."⁴

Likewise, if America's Armed Forces plan on being successful in the future, not only should there be mandatory ethics education and training within the respective services, but there should also be an overarching concept of a "joint" approach to professional military ethics and moral conduct education as well as an established joint code of ethics or at least essential core values.

The focus of this research effort is to support a concept of joint professional military ethics (PME) education and propose an all-encompassing set of Joint Services Core Character Values. The target audience for this concept is the U.S. military officer corps, however, obvious correlation and application to the enlisted ranks is assumed. To this end, there are two primary research questions that serve as a starting point in an effort to argue for the proposed joint ethics and character values focus. The questions are:

1. Should military officers be held to a higher standard than society, i.e., more pure than the polity?
2. Should errors in judgment of an ethical nature by military officers, and the recovery therefrom, be viewed as career ending or might they be character building?

Through answers to these two research questions, I will support a joint concept of PME education and propose Joint Service Core Character Values.

Most military leaders would agree that given the current and projected decline in financial, material, and personnel resources in the Armed Forces, joint operations are not only the short

³ Dean of Academics, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, letter to Director, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 1500/C 402, subject: *Minutes From Military Education Coordination Conference (MECC), 19 Nov 1997*, 19 November 1997.

⁴ Department of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Vision 2010* (Washington, D.C.: The Pentagon, 1996), 2.

term trend but a long term reality. In order to be successful in the pursuit of jointness, proficiency and professionalism in all aspects of military performance is essential. One aspect, that of ethical behavior and moral conduct, is clearly a necessary element in terms of ultimate success. Richard A. Gabriel states that "some code of values is necessary to give a human and humane dimension to the soldier's awesome tasks and responsibilities."⁵

Although each respective service in the U.S. Armed Forces is tasked with the responsibility to organize, train, and equip their forces, one U.S. Army General has stated that "as the 'joint culture' matures...the joint profession of arms will eventually require a set of organizational values or ethics."⁶ The specific focus of this argument is that of *profession*. As will be discussed in Chapter 3, a distinguishing characteristic of a profession is that it is guided by technical or ethical standards. Although many leaders in the armed services do not necessarily agree with the need for *joint* values or ethics, this paper portrays the essential role that ethics codes or values systems play in various professions.

Specifically, the two research questions that will guide this effort directly relate to the need for comprehensive and consistent ethics education and training at all levels in the Armed Forces. If by their very nature the military is going to be held to a higher standard than society, then there should be a clear set of standards to guide their performance and conduct. Additionally, being products of society and more importantly being human, it should be reasonably anticipated that military personnel and leaders will make mistakes. Granted, most services agree, in various degrees, that mistakes will happen and that personnel should learn from their mistakes and press on. The U.S. Marine Corps, however, understands the concept of learning from mistakes as long as the nature of the mistake is "outside the areas of morality and ethics."⁷ It is this strict interpretation that would support ending a career over an ethical

⁵ Richard A. Gabriel, *To Serve With Honor: A Treatise on Military Ethics and the Way of the Soldier* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979), 24.

⁶ Dean of Academics, Marine Corps Command and Staff College, letter, 1500/C 402, 19 November 1997.

⁷ Department of the Navy, Commandant of the Marine Corps, *The 31st Commandant's Planning Guidance* (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, United States Marine Corps, July 1995), 24.

error in judgment versus focusing on character development.⁸ Situations like this, i.e., varied interpretation and enforcement of respective service values systems, lend support to a joint concept of PME education and a clearly stated set of core character values for the Armed Forces as a whole. Arguably, there will always be subjective interpretation of a given code or values system, but the essence of maintaining such a code as a moral compass for the overall profession of service in the U.S. Armed Forces is the key.

Although each service has its own unique character and mission, and educates their respective personnel quite well, there should still be an overarching code established in order to provide a guide, or more precisely that moral compass, for each service to abide by. The character of the respective services is portrayed in their codes and subsequently members of the services consider themselves as belonging to a specific *profession*, i.e., airman, Marine, sailor, or soldier. If one accepts the premise that jointness is the future of U.S. military operations and that this entails a *joint* profession of arms, then a joint set of overarching core character values is indeed necessary.

The question remains as to what the joint PME education should look like, who the target audience should be, and what exactly the code should spell out? One leadership model for military personnel spells out the following four general features:

1. They will have skill in the use of their weapons.
2. They will be disciplined in working with others and be able to improvise when left to fend for themselves.
3. They will be motivated.
4. They will have a sense of both personal and group moral responsibility.⁹

⁸ Charles C. Krulak, General, USMC, Commandant of the Marine Corps, interview at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Washington, D.C., by author, 7 January 1998.

⁹ Nicholas Fotion and Gerard Elfstrom, *Military Ethics: Guidelines for Peace and War* (Boston, MA: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 62.

Specifically, moral responsibility, or more plainly responsibility, is one of two common threads evident in each of the Armed Forces respective ethics programs. For this reason, responsibility and the other common thread, accountability, would be key elements to a joint code. The joint character values should also avoid redundancy in that they should not duplicate what is already taught by the respective services. Instead they should enhance what is presently brought to the joint table while seeking a peculiarly joint community focus.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND

Establishing an Ethical and Moral Framework

Moral courage is a more rare commodity than bravery in battle or great intelligence.¹⁰

In an effort to comprehensively grasp the ethical issues which the U.S. military or any other organization must face, it is essential to develop a common framework from which to begin. A tried and true method to begin with is to define some elementary terms used not only in this paper, but also in the fields of philosophy and more directly the studies of ethics, morals, and human vice and virtue. These terms, although intuitively understood by most people, are the subject of countless books and papers, therefore indicating a much deeper and consequently more complex background. This chapter will focus on not only defining these and related concepts and terms, but will also highlight their relevance to the contemporary U.S. military officer, regardless of service affiliation.

What exactly is the difference between the terms "ethics" and "morals?" Are they different, and if so, how are they related? Assuming an understanding of the meaning and the relationship between these terms, what then is their relevance to the behavior and performance of the Armed Forces and the U.S. military officer? How does an understanding of the relevancy of these and associated terms and issues relate to the current guidance of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) regarding ethics education in the respective

¹⁰ Robert F. Kennedy, *The Harper Book of Quotations*, Third ed. (New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers, Inc., 1993), 309.

services as well as an overarching joint PME code? Finally, how is the CJCS guidance implemented in each of the respective military services? These questions will be answered by presenting the various schools of thought and then focusing on the recommended approach. This will aid in supporting later discussions on professions, service approaches and ultimately the proposed code itself.

Ethics, Morals: There is a Difference

In short, ethics is "the philosophical study of morality."¹¹ Another way of viewing ethics is a "study or discipline which concerns itself with judgments of approval and disapproval, judgments as to the rightness or wrongness, goodness or badness, virtue or vice, desirability or wisdom of actions, dispositions, ends, objects or states of affairs."¹² Morals, on the other hand, although frequently used interchangeably with ethics, is used more "to designate the codes, conduct, and customs of individuals or of groups, as when one speaks of the morals of a person or of a people...equivalent to the Greek word *ethos* and the Latin *mores*."¹³ For purposes of this paper, the term *ethics* will be used when referring to the overall study of morals and moral philosophy. In a similar vein, the term morals will be used when referring to the specific actions, conduct, customs and codes of individuals or groups.

Not only are ethics and morals closely related, but there are several related terms that naturally come into the discussion as essential to gaining a clear and comprehensive grasp of the overall environment. To begin with, the term *value* is simply "something (as a principle or quality) intrinsically valuable or desirable; sought material...instead of human," *value judgment* then refers to "a judgment attributing a value (as good, evil, beautiful, or desirable)

¹¹ *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, Ed. by Robert Audi (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1995), under the word "ethics."

¹² *Dictionary of Philosophy*, Ed. by Dagobert D. Runes (Totowa, NJ: Littlefield, Adams & Co, 1971), under the word "ethics."

¹³ *Ibid.*, under the word "morals."

to a certain thing, action, or entity.¹⁴ Understanding the essence of what value means is necessary to developing a more focused view of ethics and morals.

The terms *vice*, *virtue*, and more specifically *virtue ethics* are those that get directly to the heart of the subject matter at hand. For purposes of this paper, the term *vice* refers to "moral depravity or corruption...a moral fault or failing...an abnormal behavior pattern in a domestic animal detrimental to its health or usefulness...sexual immorality."¹⁵ *Virtue* on the other hand, according to Aristotle is, "that state of being which constitutes its peculiar excellence and enables it to perform its function well; particularly in man, the activity of reason and or rationally ordered habits."¹⁶ The Romans took the understanding of virtue one more step and included an association with "virility and strength of character."¹⁷ Finally, to round out the definition of *virtue*, Webster combines the above perspectives with contemporary flavor and depicts it as "strength, manliness...conformity to a standard of right: morality...a particular moral excellence," and even "chastity esp. in a woman."¹⁸

The final definition completes this basic framework for addressing the moral and ethical nature of this paper's research focus as well as lend support and credibility to a need for joint PME education. In terms of Western philosophy, *virtue ethics* have been predominant throughout the centuries in the teachings of Aristotle, Plato, and Saint Thomas Aquinas. Immanuel Kant, Prussian philosopher of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, even subscribed to some of the basic conceptions of *virtue ethics*. In short, *virtue ethics* is a concept of ethics whereby "virtues play a central or independent role."¹⁹ Table 1 depicts one historian's summary of the moral virtues espoused by Aristotle.²⁰ The goal of virtue ethics

¹⁴ *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, Ed. by Henry Bosley Woolf (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster Inc., Publishers, 1977) under the word "value."

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, under the word "vice."

¹⁶ *Dictionary of Philosophy*, under the word "virtue."

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, under the word "virtue."

¹⁹ *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, under the words "virtue ethics."

²⁰ Fred and Christina Sommers, *Vice and Virtue in Everyday Life: Introductory Readings in Ethics*, 3d ed. (Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1993), 72.

and the crux of Aristotle's teachings in this area is that one should always strive toward achieving the *mean* as indicated in Table 1, as opposed to bending toward *vice*, i.e., *excess* or *deficit*.

Activity	Vice (excess)	Virtue (mean)	Vice (deficit)
Facing Death	Too much fear (i.e., cowardice)	Right amount of fear (i.e., courage)	Too little fear (i.e., foolhardiness)
Bodily actions (eating, drinking, sex, etc.)	Profligacy	Temperance	No name for this state, but it may be called "insensitivity"
Giving money	Prodigality	Liberality	Illiberality
Large-scale giving	Vulgarity	Magnificence	Meanness
Claiming honors	Vanity	Pride	Humility
Social intercourse	Obsequiousness	Friendliness	Sulkiness
According honors	Injustice	Justice	Injustice
Retribution for wrongdoing	Injustice	Justice	Injustice

Table 1. The Moral Virtues

Source: Fred and Christina Sommers, *Vice and Virtue in Everyday Life: Introductory Readings in Ethics*, 3d ed. (Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1993), 72.

The central theme of virtue ethics is focused on basic personal character "with dispositions relevantly linked to human flourishing."²¹ Pertinent to this entire discussion is an awareness of exactly what these virtues are. The main point is that virtue is considered the ideal between two extremes, excess and deficit.

To elaborate on the first virtue of Table 1, one of the three U.S. Marine Corps' and U.S. Navy's Core Values, *Courage* would be considered a mean (goal) between the extremes of cowardice (not enough courage) and foolhardiness (too much courage). The key to understanding virtue ethics is to differentiate between the moral virtues and the intellectual virtues. Moral virtues are those associated with the character of the individual and subject to

²¹ *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, under the words "virtue ethics."

attaining the mean parameters previously illustrated, whereas intellectual virtue or excellence is not. In the final analysis, the final guidance from Aristotle is that virtue "requires habituation, and therefore requires practice, and not just theory."²²

Immanuel Kant continues the ethical debate by focusing on moral actions. According to Kant, "to act morally is to act from no other motive than the motive of doing what is right."²³ In other words, a moral action is one that is undertaken because it is the right thing to do, and not because it is or happens to be a law or custom. Kant, stressing reason and a sense of duty, developed an argument for two types of commands dictated by reason. The "categorical imperative," based on the maxim that moral acts are those whose principles "should be universal laws," i.e., "do not lie," cheat or steal, dictates that any course of action should be followed because of its innate rightness and necessity.²⁴ The "hypothetical imperative", on the other hand, is more conditional.²⁵

Ethics, Morals, the Armed Forces and the Joint Environment

The basis for much of the education and training efforts in the Armed Forces is evident in teachings of Aristotle and Kant. As indicated in Table 1, *moral virtues* are emphasized in the respective services. Each one, over the years, "has developed a set of common core values or moral standards upon which it bases its service to the nation."²⁶ These values and standards, honed and tailored since the founding of the United States, reflect the peculiar nature of the particular service to which they apply. There are also common threads that are unmistakable throughout.

It is this common ground that fosters the basis in arguing for a joint PME education effort and even a joint code of PME and conduct. The Joint Staff and the various joint commands

²² Sommers, 90.

²³ Ibid., 103 - 104.

²⁴ Ibid., 104.

²⁵ Ibid., 104.

²⁶ Larson, 25 January 1996.

around the globe similarly operate in such a peculiar fashion as to warrant an applicable set of standards that accurately reflect the joint environment. The common threads found in each service code or set of values and standards can and should be woven with the peculiarities of the joint community to form joint core character values. These joint core character values would then act as the basis for the joint PME and standards of conduct code.

Now that the link between ethics and the joint community has been formed, it is necessary to understand ethics with respect to the profession of arms. Although there are several definitions, the one that is particularly appropriate and useful is that of *military ethics*. Military ethics is "the art of observing those moral obligations and precepts that are appropriate to a person's role within the military profession."²⁷ It is important to note here that in the military as with any other institution or human activity, ethics is a matter of judgment as opposed to merely abiding by an established set of scientific rules.²⁸ Likewise, based on the above definition of military ethics, judgment plays an integral role in the observation and adherence to those established moral obligations and precepts that apply to the military professional.

²⁷ Richard A. Gabriel, *To Serve With Honor: A Treatise on Military Ethics and the Way of the Soldier* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979), 29.

²⁸ Gabriel, 38.

CHAPTER 3

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS: SERVICE AND OFFICERSHIP

Professions and Professional Codes

If there are rules and regulations to govern the actions and discipline of the U.S. Armed Forces, then why even bother with a professional code of any sort? With the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) and respective service codes, one might entertain the thought that there is no need for any sort of additional code, standards of conduct or core values. This chapter explores these issues and the necessity for the military profession to not only maintain and enforce discipline through the UCMJ, but to also develop, implement, and codify a clear set of standards for the professional, ethical, and acceptable behavior of its Marines, sailors, soldiers and airmen alike.

The terms *profession* and *professional* are used quite frequently in this paper. For this reason, although it is assumed that most readers would already have an adequate understanding of these related terms, it is prudent to not only define them, but to also establish the link to morality, and ethics codes and values as well. *Profession*, therefore, for purposes of this paper is "a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation," and "the whole body of persons engaged in a calling."²⁹ A *professional* then is not only a person engaged in a profession, but is "characterized by or conforming to the technical or ethical standards of a profession."³⁰

²⁹ Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, under the word "profession."

³⁰ Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, under the word "professional."

The military officer is considered a professional. Professionalism is "characteristic of the modern officer in the same sense in which it is characteristic of the physician or lawyer."³¹ This distinguishing characteristic of officership, i.e., a profession, actually requires a professional ethic or code. This code, whether formally published or informal, would consist of a set of standards or rules which govern the conduct of members of the profession. Whether the American Bar Association's Code of Professional Responsibility, the American Medical Association's Principles of Medical Ethics of the A.M.A., or an American PME code, they all serve three critical functions:

1. They protect other members of society against abuse of the professional monopoly of expertise.
2. They define the professional as a responsible and trustworthy expert in the service of his client.
3. In some professions, they delineate the moral authority for actions necessary to the professional function but generally impermissible in moral terms.³²

Military Professionalism

The military profession exists to serve the state. To render the highest possible service the entire profession and the military force which it leads must be constituted as an effective instrument of state policy. Since political direction only comes from the top, this means that the profession has to be organized into a hierarchy of obedience. For the profession to perform its function, each level within it must be able to command the instantaneous and loyal obedience of subordinate levels. Without these relationships, military professionalism is impossible. Consequently, loyalty and obedience are the highest military virtues.³³

³¹ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (New York: Vintage Books, 1957), 7.

³² Anthony E. Hartle, *Moral Issues in Military Decision Making* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1989), 26.

³³ Huntington, 73.

In terms of the military professional, it is important to make a distinction as to who the military professional is, how and why the hierarchy of loyalty and obedience exists, and what characteristics place these at the pinnacle of military virtues.

Officership is said to be both a "bureaucratic profession and a bureaucratic organization," within which "levels of competence are distinguished by hierarchy of ranks," and duties by a "hierarchy of office."³⁴ The duties and functions of officers are typically governed by rank, however, and not based on assignment to a particular office. The exigencies of the officer are a peculiar skill in that they involve directing and controlling the military organization in the "application of violence."³⁵ Officers belong to the professional bureaucracy and the enlisted members belong to the organizational bureaucracy. Enlisted personnel are not required to have the intellectual faculty or professional responsibility of the military officer. They are viewed as technicians and specialists in the application of war and violence, however, the officer is responsible for its direction, control and management. The differentiating characteristic is that enlisted personnel, being both technical and vocational in nature, are viewed as tradesman, where military officers are viewed as professionals.³⁶ In terms of the modern military and its emphasis on education, training, and moral conduct, the term professional could very well be applied to certain enlisted ranks.

Education has been identified as essential to membership in a profession. The military profession is no different. For military officers, not only are they required to receive a certain level of undergraduate education, but as they progress beyond the middle grades, they are expected to have received a graduate education as well. One writer has determined that a "civilian graduate education is an essential element of professionalism."³⁷ It is the author's

³⁴ Ibid., 16.

³⁵ Ibid., 11.

³⁶ Ibid., 18.

³⁷ Sam Charles Sarkesian, *Beyond the Battlefield: The New Military Professionalism* (New York: Pergamon Press Inc., 1981), 179.

understanding that the focus is actually the "intellectual horizons, conceptual perspectives, and interdisciplinary dimensions that are a fundamental part of graduate education."³⁸

Professional military officers are by virtue of their profession responsible and loyal to the state which they serve. Enlisted personnel, although aware of the concept of loyalty to the state, are usually trained for obedience to their superior officers as well as orders from the President. While officers swear sole allegiance to the Constitution prior to entering the particular office, enlisted personnel not only swear allegiance to the Constitution, but also to obey the orders of the President and senior officers. Officers, when commissioned and promoted, are appointed to a particular office while enlisted personnel are appointed to a specific grade or rank. This distinction clearly establishes the hierarchy whereby loyalty and obedience are brought to the fore as being paramount to the successful leading and management of the military organization.

The professional ethos of the military profession is such that it should contain certain ideas or concepts as being essential to their overall success. These concepts would serve to form the intellectual dimension from which a system of core values and professional ethics would stem. The following represent the minimum of what is necessary:

1. Sense of history
2. Conflicts within society between individual rights and system imperatives
3. Understanding of ideals and actualities of the American political system
4. Understanding the role of the military in a democratic society
5. Political consequences of military decisions and military actions
6. Moral and ethical issues of professional service and standards of moral behavior
7. Problems of political change and economic development³⁹

³⁸ Ibid., 179.

³⁹ Sarkesian, 184.

The respective services have actually addressed these concepts within the framework of their codes or core values. It is important therefore to incorporate these very concepts into the joint core character values.

Challenges to the Military Profession

Richard A. Gabriel defines five challenges to the military profession; "occupationalism, managerialism, confusion with bureaucracy, specialization, and competing ethical systems."⁴⁰ He indicates that these challenges are all a result of attempts both outside as well as inside the military to force changes that would have the military look more like a civilian business or corporation. For purposes of this discussion, the focus will be on occupationalism and competing ethics.

Occupationalism, or treating the military as if it was any other job as opposed to a profession, has been a growing challenge for quite some time as it attempts to invade the mind-set and perspective of society as well as some in the military profession. It is seen as a threat in that it would "transfer the inequalities of the larger society" to the profession of arms.⁴¹ This goes right to the heart of the issue of whether or not the military officer should be held to a higher standard than society.

As a profession, the military is certainly required to espouse a code of strict ethical standards. If a continued turn toward occupationalism is the trend, then there would seem to be no incentive to adhere to a higher ethical standard than society because the military would be more and more likened to just any occupation or job. This possibility would have devastating effects on the overall military organization. The danger here is that the professional ethical standards of the military profession would quickly begin to fall apart.

A related challenge is competing ethics. The obvious concern in this concept is that of compromising the high ethics of the profession in order to be more like society. It is not

⁴⁰ Gabriel, 94.

⁴¹ Ibid., 96.

likely that a doctor or lawyer would strive to have their respective ethical standards or codes changed to be reflective of society. The importance of having clearly stated and accepted codes to guide a profession's members is to avoid the possibility of changing for the sake of change.

Professional military officers cannot allow their lofty standards to be imperiled by arbitrary moves toward the challenges of occupationalism, competing ethics, or any other threat. In a personal interview, General Charles C. Krulak, Commandant of the Marine Corps, was asked whether military officers should be held to a higher standard than society; he stated "absolutely!"⁴² He referenced a quote from *A Vietnam Experience: Ten Years of Reflection* by Vice Admiral James B. Stockdale, U.S. Navy Retired, that "you limit a man's potential by appealing to what he is, you must appeal to what he might be."⁴³ General Krulak additionally stated that "as America's Corps of Marines, we can't appeal to what is the standard of our citizens, we must appeal to what we can be, which is higher than that...we must and we always have."⁴⁴

Professional Ethics Codes

*A professional ethic is a code which consists of a set of rules and standards governing the conduct of members of a professional group. The code may be a formally written published code, or it may be informal, consisting of standards of conduct perpetuated by training and example.*⁴⁵

A code of ethics is not simply a cure-all or panacea in and of itself. Standing alone, a code is just that, a code or collection of words with no potency. It is necessary to view an established code or set of principles or standards "as but one step among many in a major effort."⁴⁶ Not only should the standards be set high, but there needs to be a program that

⁴² Krulak, 7 January 1998.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Hartle, 24.

⁴⁶ Major Francis B. Galligan, U.S. Army, *Military Professionalism and Ethics* (Newport, RI: Naval War College Center for Advanced Research, 1979), 106.

aggressively educates and trains throughout a military professional's career. The code should additionally serve to "reinforce and unify professional thinking," as well as represent to the nation and the world "what the military profession stands for and by what standards it accepts judgment."⁴⁷

The U.S. Marine Corps clearly establishes the relationship between a code or standard of conduct and ethics. This link is viewed as essential for Marines to understand from the very moment they earn the right to wear the Marine Corps emblem. For Marines, "ethics are the standards of [the] Corps," and "ethical behavior is action taken specifically in observance of a defined standard of conduct."⁴⁸ It is this standard of conduct or code that generally provides guidelines by which Marines are expected to abide. These guidelines, when coupled with the individuals own choice, decision and subsequent action, are what assist leaders and subordinates within the institution in living up to the established ethos.

The focus of the code is important in determining the content of the code. There has to be an acceptable median by which the code would not only be addressed to the intended population, but also "not so pious as to be dismissed as empty verbiage" or possibly something utterly unattainable.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Ibid., 107.

⁴⁸ Department of the Navy, Commandant of the Marine Corps, *Leading Marines* (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 3 January 1995), 39.

⁴⁹ Galligan, 107.

CHAPTER 4

THE SERVICES' APPROACHES

Modern history is replete with tales of famous military officers and their great victories. While the focus is usually on the successes as opposed to failures, there have most likely been an equal or possibly greater number of mistakes made along the way. Most service leaders would agree that mistakes will happen regardless of the degree of training and education. Likewise, not only are military personnel expected and even encouraged to make mistakes, the key is that the entire situation be taken as a learning and growing experience. It can be argued that one distinguishing characteristic of a successful leader is the ability to develop future leaders by allowing mistakes to occur and recognizing the individual potential of the particular officer.

This chapter will serve to present just exactly what the respective services views are on cultivating leaders and developing character. The various service core values and standards will also be discussed in an effort to not just depict differences, but to reveal the common threads present throughout. By developing this commonality, and identifying a link with the philosophical framework previously discussed, this chapter should not only convey the rationale for a joint set of core character values and PME education, but also highlight the imperative nature of the endeavor.

The U.S. Marine Corps and U. S. Navy

The U.S. Marine Corps identifies its three core values as "Honor, Courage and Commitment."⁵⁰ Table 2 specifically defines each of these values.

HONOR: The bedrock of our character. The quality that guides Marines to exemplify the ultimate in ethical and moral behavior; never to lie, cheat, or steal; to abide by an uncompromising code of integrity; to respect human dignity; to have respect and concern for each other. The quality of maturity, dedication, trust, and dependability that commits Marines to act responsibly; to be accountable for actions; to fulfill obligations; and to hold others accountable for their actions.
COURAGE: The heart of our core values, courage is the mental, moral, and physical strength ingrained in Marines to carry them through the challenges of combat and the mastery of fear; to do what is right; to adhere to a higher standard of personal conduct; to lead by example, and to make tough decisions under stress and pressure. It is the inner strength that enables a Marine to take that extra step.
COMMITMENT: The spirit of determination and dedication within members of a force of arms that leads to professionalism and mastery of the art of war. It leads to the highest order of discipline for a unit and self; it is the ingredient that enables 24-hour-a-day dedication to Corps and Country; pride; concern for others; and an unrelenting determination to achieve a standard of excellence in every endeavor. Commitment is the value that establishes the Marine as the warrior and citizen others strive to emulate.

Table 2. U.S. Marine Corps Core Values

Source: Department of the Navy, Commandant of the Marine Corps, *Leading Marines* (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 3 January 1995), 101-102.

Honor is viewed as the "bedrock" of the Marine's character, and is meant to "exemplify the ultimate in ethical and moral behavior."⁵¹ The qualities of uncompromising integrity, mutual respect, maturity, dedication, trust, dependability, responsibility, and accountability are all called out as specific elements of honor.⁵² It is important to note these qualities as they are

⁵⁰ Department of the Navy, Commandant of the Marine Corps, *Leading Marines*, 3.

⁵¹ Ibid., 101.

⁵² Ibid., 101.

presented in this discussion, because it will soon be very evident just how similar the various service codes are.

Courage is considered to be the "heart" of the core values, and is epitomized by moral, mental, and physical strength.⁵³ Like honor, courage is developed from boot camp or Officer Candidate School and continues to grow and mature throughout a Marine's career. Courage, as a key character element, is viewed as the ability to lead by example, to do what is right, and to be decisive under stressful conditions.⁵⁴

Commitment, or the "spirit of determination and dedication," is that character quality that solidifies the profession.⁵⁵ Samuel Huntington equated the Marines to the French Foreign Legion in that they "serve their governments with unvarying and impartial competence," and the "military quality of the professional is independent of the cause for which he fights."⁵⁶ Combined with honor and courage, commitment is what leads America to the conclusion that she can trust in the Marine Corps to defend the Constitution yesterday, today and in the future.

Similar to the U.S. Marine Corps, the U.S. Navy followed the Marine Corps' lead and also adopted "Honor, Courage and Commitment" as their "bedrock principles."⁵⁷ The U.S. Navy, like the U.S. Marine Corps, has been striving diligently toward not just developing a set of clearly defined values, but more importantly to establish a way by which all members are inculcated with these core values at the very start of their careers. Equally as important as the initial education are the continued efforts throughout the service member's tour of duty. Another relevant point is that these values are meant to stay with the Marines and Sailors for the rest of their personal and professional lives. Table 3 depicts the U.S. Navy's definitions of their core values.

⁵³ Department of the Navy, Commandant of the Marine Corps, *Leading Marines*, 101.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 101.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 102.

⁵⁶ Huntington, 74.

⁵⁷ Department of the Navy, United States Navy, *Core Values of the United States Navy*, downloaded from *Sprynet* (www.navy.mil/navpalib/traditions/html/corvalu.html), 29 December 1997.

Honor: "I will bear true faith and allegiance..." Accordingly, we will: Conduct ourselves in the highest ethical manner in all relationships with peers, superiors and subordinates; Be honest and truthful in our dealings with each other, and with those outside the Navy; Be willing to make honest recommendations and accept those of junior personnel; Encourage new ideas and deliver the bad news, even when unpopular; Abide by an uncompromising code of integrity, taking responsibility for our actions and keeping our word; Fulfill or exceed our legal and ethical responsibilities in our public and personal lives twenty-four hours a day. Illegal or improper behavior or even the appearance of such behavior will not be tolerated. We are accountable for our professional and personal behavior. We will be mindful of the privilege to serve our fellow Americans.
Courage: "I will support and defend..." Accordingly, we will have: courage to meet the demands of our profession and the mission when it is hazardous, demanding, or otherwise difficult; Make decisions in the best interest of the navy and the nation, without regard to personal consequences; Meet these challenges while adhering to a higher standard of personal conduct and decency; Be loyal to our nation, ensuring the resources entrusted to us are used in an honest, careful, and efficient way. Courage is the value that gives us the moral and mental strength to do what is right, even in the face of personal or professional adversity.
Commitment: "I will obey the orders..." Accordingly, we will: Demand respect up and down the chain of command; Care and safety, professional, personal and spiritual well-being of our people; Show respect toward all people without regard to race, religion, or gender; Treat each individual with human dignity; Be committed to positive change and constant improvement; Exhibit the highest degree of moral character, technical excellence, and quality and competence in what we have been trained to do. The day-to-day duty of every Navy man and woman is to work together as a team to improve the quality of our work, our people and ourselves.

Table 3. U.S. Navy Core Values

Source: Department of the Navy, United States Navy, *Core Values of the United States Navy*, downloaded from *Sprynet* (www.navy.mil/navpalib/traditions/html/corvalu.html), 29 December 1997.

Without breaking down each element, there are certain qualities specified that sound familiar to not just the Marine Corps' values, but the other services as well. Honesty, integrity, responsibility, accountability, loyalty, mutual respect, moral character, technical excellence, and competence are all notions used to elaborate on the three general character values of honor, courage, and commitment. The U.S. Naval Academy has also taken a

serious look at incorporating these core values into the curriculum through its Character Development Division and even a course entitled "Ethics and Moral Reasoning for the Naval Leader."⁵⁸ Admiral Larson and his staff recognize the importance of developing character, of which ethics plays an integral role, through "rigorous education and fixed by virtuous habit."⁵⁹ This concept of habit, as indicated previously in Chapter 2, is exactly what Aristotle indicated as being essential for the development of virtue.

The U.S. Army's Seven Inherent Values

The U.S. Army identifies seven characteristics or values that "make [their] profession different. The Seven Inherent Values are "duty, honor, courage, integrity, loyalty, respect and selfless service."⁶⁰ These seven values, as described by General Dennis J. Reimer, U.S. Army Chief of Staff, are directly linked to leadership. According to General Reimer, "leaders must nurture those values, exemplify them and instill them in their subordinates" through "sustained programs in the field, and values-based training" that consists of "more than just classroom instruction."⁶¹

There has been much written about the U.S. Army's guiding values. Although General Reimer describes seven, there are actually three primary U.S. Army core values typically espoused by authors: 1. Duty, 2. Honor, and 3. Country. Not only are these traits discussed by authors Anthony Hartle and Richard Gabriel, but they are also key elements to the code for cadets at the U.S. Military Academy, West Point.

U.S. Air Force

⁵⁸ Larson, 3.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 4.

⁶⁰ Department of the Army, United States Army Chief of Staff, *On Leadership*, downloaded from *Sprynet* (www.hqda.army.mil/ocsa/9710art.htm), 22 December 1997.

⁶¹ Ibid.

The U.S. Air Force identifies its three core values as "Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We do."⁶² Table 4 outlines these three core values and also distinguishes between them by identifying key related terms. Along with the Marine Corps, the Air Force has developed a comprehensive and extremely user-friendly values program for all of its service members as well as civilian employees. As with the previously identified sets of values and principles, many of the traits listed in Table 4 will resemble the basic tenets espoused by the other services.

⁶² Department of the Air Force, *United States Air Force Core Values*, 1 January 1997, downloaded from Sprynet (<http://www.usafa.af.mil/core-value/key-docs.html>), 3 January 1998.

Integrity First: Integrity is a character trait. It is the willingness to do what is right even when no one is looking. It is the "moral compass"--the inner voice; the voice of self-control; the basis for the trust imperative in today's military. Integrity also covers several other moral traits indispensable to national service; courage, honesty, responsibility, accountability, justice, openness, self-respect, and humility.
Service Before Self: Service before self tells us that professional duties take precedence over personal desires. At the very least it includes the following behaviors: rule following, respect for others, discipline and self-controls, and faith in the system.
Excellence in All We do: Excellence in all we do directs us to develop sustained passion for continuous improvement and innovation that will propel the Air Force into a long-term, upward spiral of accomplishment and performance. Included in excellence is product/service excellence, personal excellence, community excellence, resources excellence, and operational excellence.

Table 4. U.S. Air Force Core Values

Source: Department of the Air Force, *United States Air Force Core Values*, 1 January 1997, downloaded from *Sprynet* (<http://www.usafa.af.mil/core-value/key-docs.html>), 3 January 1998.

U.S. Coast Guard

In turn, the U.S. Coast Guard has developed its own set of values on which they build their entire character. These core values or "Attributes" form the framework upon which the U.S. Coast Guard operates and refers to as their "distinctive character" that will carry them into the new millennium.⁶³ Table 5 depicts each of these traits along with the U.S. Coast Guard's definition of them. At first glance, it seems that the Coast Guard has added a few more terms than that portrayed by the Air Force, Marines, and Navy. When compared with the fundamental ideals encompassed within their definitions, however, it becomes clear that the Coast Guard is basically consistent with her sister services. At the risk of sounding repetitive, it is very obvious that the U.S. Coast Guard's Attributes, like the other Armed Forces, have

⁶³ United States Coast Guard, U.S. Coast Guard Commandant's Direction, *U.S. Coast Guard Attributes*, downloaded from *Sprynet* (<http://www.dot.gov/dotinfo/uscg/comdir/CGAttrib.html>), 12 December 1997.

keyed on certain specific values or standards that they see as essential to success not just in peace or war, but in the personal as well as the professional lives of its service members.

Excellence: WE are committed to quality and excellence in everything we do and recognize the effects of our decisions on people and resources. Quality, empowerment and continuous improvement are essential to our success. WE value listening as an important tool in learning from others.
Leadership: WE are visionary in our programs and everyday activities. OUR actions are result-oriented. WE respect the trust the American public places on us and are effective stewards of the taxpayers interest.
Service to the American Public: WE exist to provide quality service to the American public as the premier maritime service in the world. WE are renowned as a maritime humanitarian and safety organization.
Traditional Roles: WE are a professional organization whose personnel are proud of their traditions as lifesavers, guardians of the sea and military service. OUR principal roles are focused on maritime safety, marine environmental protection, maritime law enforcement and national security.
Armed Force: WE will remain one of the five armed forces of the United States. WE have military roles and are military in character.
Multi-mission: WE will retain the ability to respond to changing national priorities and cases by procuring, maintaining and crewing assets suitable for conducting varied operations in the coastal and marine environment.
Maritime Focus: WE operate on, over and beneath the waters of the United States and the world's oceans. OUR link to the sea is the common thread which binds all Coast Guard tasks and people together.
Work Life: WE provide a safe and balanced work-life environment for all our employees. WE value the needs of individuals. OUR most important resources are people.
Ethical Standards: WE honor and promote personal integrity, loyalty, and professional behavior. WE value diversity, teamwork, and responsiveness. WE are responsible and accountable for what we do.

Table 5. U.S. Coast Guard Attributes

Source: United States Coast Guard, U.S. Coast Guard Commandant's Direction, *U.S. Coast Guard Attributes*, downloaded from *Sprynet* (<http://www.dot.gov/dotinfo/uscg/comdir.html>), 12 December 1997.

What is in a Word?

There are several common threads that are woven throughout the various service values and standards. This section will serve to identify exactly what those threads are and how they relate to an overarching joint set of values. There is a wide variety of PME codes or core values that each service has adopted into its respective culture to best portray the ethos of that service. These sets of core values are interpreted and enforced differently depending on which service is the topic of discussion. The U.S. Marine Corps is the most rigid with respect

to their core values. They are the only service that expressly states that "outside the areas of morality and ethics" Marines are allowed to make mistakes.⁶⁴ The stipulation is that they learn from their errors. The U.S. Marine Corps also focuses and insists on discipline, motivation, dedication, intelligence, independence, responsibility, accountability, boldness and initiative as essential traits for future success.⁶⁵ The U.S. Marine Corps has recently been labeled "extreme" and "a little bit dangerous" by then Assistant Secretary of the Army Sara Lister, then conversely touted as "leaders" by former Senator Nancy Kassebaum Baker, R-Kansas, with respect to gender segregated training.⁶⁶ This example of the varying perspectives regarding just one service underscores the importance of understanding the need for a joint focus based on the various services' core values. Assuming the importance of a joint understanding of character values, the key then is to extract the common threads within these concepts and develop a joint framework of core values and PME.

In order to be chosen for the joint core values, the character traits or values must be included in three or more of the five service codes. Table 6 has been designed in order to capture all of the service values in one view. The information depicted in the table represents values and traits extracted from Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5. Included in the table is guidance from some of the respective service chiefs as well as defining terms from within the values themselves. The core values or attributes are bold and italicized, and the service chief's additional guidance is not. By extracting the actual meaning of the various values, the intended concept of the basic service values is assured of being included. Another necessary point is that not only have the overall service codes been addressed, but also the codes of the U.S. Naval Academy and the U.S. Air Force Academy.

By reviewing Table 6, one is able to extract the common character themes, values, and traits espoused by each of the services and service chiefs. These common themes, values, and

⁶⁴ Department of the Navy, Commandant of the Marine Corps, *The 31st Commandant's Planning Guidance*, 24.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁶⁶ Kathleen Parker, "A Big Step Forward in Training," *Potomac News*, 2 January 1998, Sec. D1.

traits, represented in Table 7, will be presented and discussed in detail in the next chapter. In order to keep the joint concept concisely expressed, and because of the all-inclusive yet concise nature of the primary terms used to define the U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Navy core values, the terms honor, courage, commitment, and duty will be used. These four terms, based on the authors subjective understanding coupled with service definitions and the philosophical framework established in Chapter 2, most clearly represent the desired character virtues of the military professional.

U.S. Air Force	U.S. Army	U.S. Coast Guard	U.S. Marine Corps	U.S. Navy
<i>Integrity first:</i> courage, honesty, responsibility, accountability, justice, openness, self-respect, self-respect, humility	<i>Honor</i>	<i>Excellence:</i> quality, empowerment, continuous improvement, listening, learning	<i>Honor:</i> integrity, mutual respect, dedication, trust, dependability, responsibility, accountability	<i>Honor:</i> true faith, allegiance, ethical behavior, honesty, integrity, responsibility, accountability
<i>Service before self:</i> rule following, respect, discipline, self-control, faith	<i>Courage</i>	<i>Leadership:</i> vision, trust, respect	<i>Courage:</i> moral, mental, physical, high standard of conduct, lead by example, inner strength	<i>Courage:</i> support, high standard of conduct, loyalty, moral/mental strength, defense
<i>Excellence in all we do:</i> product quality, service quality, personal, community, resources, operations, knowledge, character, stamina	<i>Duty</i>	<i>Service to the American Public:</i> quality service, humanitarian, safety	<i>Commitment:</i> determination, dedication, pride, excellence, discipline, motivation, intelligence, initiative independence, boldness	<i>Commitment:</i> obedience, mutual respect, continuous improvement, character, excellence, quality, competence
	<i>Integrity</i>	<i>Armed Force:</i> military character		
	<i>Loyalty</i>	<i>Multi-Mission:</i> coastal, marine		
	<i>Respect</i>	<i>Maritime Focus</i>		
	<i>Selfless service</i>	<i>Work Life:</i> safety, balance, people		
	moral responsibility, obligation, leadership, diversity	<i>Ethical Standards:</i> integrity, diversity, prof. behavior, teamwork, loyalty, responsiveness, responsibility, accountability		

Table 6. Service Core Values Comparison

CHAPTER 5

JOINT PROFESSION OF ARMS FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Joint Vision 2010 is the conceptual template for how America's Armed Forces will channel the vitality and innovation of its people in an effort to achieve dominance across the range of military operations through the application of new operational concepts while providing a common direction for [the] Services in developing their unique capabilities within a joint framework of doctrine and programs as they prepare to meet an uncertain and challenging future.⁶⁷

Why Joint Ethics?

As indicated in the above quote from *Joint Vision 2010*, common direction, unique capabilities, and a joint framework are key to meeting the uncertain future of the new millennium. *Joint Vision 2010* also identifies the six elements that are critical for transforming "operational concepts into joint capabilities" as people, leadership, doctrine, education and training, organizational structure, and materiel.⁶⁸ Each of these areas require a great amount of manpower, money, and material. It is also no great stretch of the imagination to understand the relationship that the people and the leadership work within the organization to educate and train, based on doctrine supplied by materiel assets. If the common goal of the Armed Forces is "a joint force--persuasive in peace, decisive in war," and "preeminent in any form of conflict," then the basic tenets or standards that guide the Armed Forces should be joint in nature as well.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Department of Defense, *Joint Vision 2010*, 1.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 2.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 2.

Minutes from the annual Military Education Coordination Conference of 19 November 1997 very clearly summarize the current view held by the CJCS with respect to a joint ethics code and joint PME education.

- No need for comprehensive ethics education programs as perceived by the Cheney Commission (already are comprehensive), but that Services were to review their own programs to ensure they were sequential and progressive, i.e., a "cradle [junior] to grave [senior]," building block approach.
- That the CJCS did not need to define a specific education requirements for JPME, rather he would make a statement as to the importance of ethics education in the PME framework for the development of our officers within the Officer Professional Military Education Policy (OPMEP) document revision currently under development--essentially an enduring SAE.
- That the CJCS should not attempt to develop some overarching Joint Code of Ethics.
Note: LTG Chilcoat, representing the minority opinion on this issue, will maintain situation awareness on this issue as he feels that as the "joint culture" matures [a purple Armed Forces], the joint profession of arms will eventually require a set of organizational values or ethics.⁷⁰

There are several reasons noted through informal discussions in opposition to a joint ethics code and joint PME education. First, the services are different by their very nature. Second, it is the service chief's responsibility to organize, train, and equip their respective services, and it should consequently be their job to decide who, when, and what type of training is necessary for their forces. Third, what ethics and moral conduct mean to one service may have an entirely different meaning to another service. The Commandant of the Marine Corps, although adamant about there being no need for a joint concept of PME education or joint ethics code, did allow that there "probably should be," but it would never happen.⁷¹ Although ethics education is stressed as important and is directed by the CJCS to encompass a "building block approach," there is no emphasis on a joint code or core character values. The

⁷⁰ Dean of Academics, 19 November 1997.

⁷¹ Krulak, 7 January 1998.

Commandant also referenced the significantly differing service approaches to fraternization as an example of why there could never be a consensus as to what a joint code should consist of.

The very reasons stated above as to why there should not be a joint approach to PME education and a joint code of ethics or core values, are precisely why a Joint Service Core Character Values (Table 7) concept should be instituted. It has been established that it is the responsibility of the respective service chiefs to train their personnel. They have each gone to great lengths, as depicted in the previous chapter, to clearly delineate their respective service core values or attributes. These defining characteristics are usually rooted in time-honored traditions that are typically related to past valorous deeds. It is clearly necessary for each respective service to exemplify the values they claim. Likewise, it is just as important, if not more so, for the joint profession of arms to be bound by a “code” or Joint Service Core Character Values.

The focus on *profession* is the key to the joint perspective on ethics. As noted in Chapter 3, a *professional* is not only one engaged in a profession, but is typically characterized as living up to clearly defined and documented ethical standards. In order to realize true jointness as the vision of the future, it is necessary to not only define and document ethical standards or core character values, but to inculcate members of the *profession* with them.

In the same sense that it is important to be wary of terminology used in a coalition or allied military environment, it is even more so in terms of one "joint" force that consists of five different branches. In terms of jointness, it is essential for each of the service chiefs to ensure consistent and somewhat standardized perspectives and understandings for application in the joint environment. The differentiating aspect here is jointness compared with multi-service. Jointness is a much more complex issue in terms of integration, commonness of focus, and cooperation. True jointness cannot be achieved without a common focus on the very basic defining standards of the military profession, i.e., those of ***honor, courage, and commitment***. Although appearing to cater to the U.S. Marine Corps and Navy core values, these terms were actually chosen as a result of their frequent appearance in Table 6 as well as their defining

characteristics. The core character value of **duty**, a primary foundation for officer PME, is reflected in order to capture the essence of obedience, self-discipline, and service to country.⁷² Each of the values in Table 7 noted to the right of these basic standards are intended to narrow the specific focus on that particular character value.

Honor	Integrity, Loyalty, Trust, Ethical Behavior, Pride, Character, Responsibility, Accountability
Courage	Moral, Mental and Physical, High Standard of Conduct, Lead by Example
Commitment	Constitution, Obligation, Quality, Excellence, Initiative, Mutual Respect, Community, Continuous Improvement, Knowledge, Dedication, Initiative, Safety
Duty	Respect, Force of Moral Obligation, Legal Obligation, Service, Obedience, Self Discipline

Table 7. Joint Services Core Character Values (Proposed)

By the above reasoning, the CJCS could feasibly develop a joint concept for PME education and an ethics code, or adopt the proposed Joint Service Core Character Values. By being more proactive at the JCS level, the CJCS could realistically institute this joint concept with the understanding that each service continue to maintain their established core values as well as an education and training approach that not only focuses on the particular service, but also clearly portrays the link to the joint community. This direction is consistent with the "internal" code proposed by Fotion and Elfstrom in that the focus would revolve around "rules governing the basic military relationships" that would exist "in any military organization."⁷³

In *Joint Pub 1*, although the CJCS talks of "values in joint warfare," he does not go far enough in emphasizing the need to **educate** all members of the U.S. Armed Forces on the joint guidance with respect to ethics.⁷⁴ He recognizes the roles of the Services to "organize,

⁷² Hartle, 47.

⁷³ Fotion and Elfstrom, 77.

⁷⁴ Department of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Pub 1: Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: The Pentagon, 1995), vii.

train, equip, and sustain" their forces, however, he also emphasizes that "these forces are employed under joint force commanders."⁷⁵ Given the *joint* operational environment along with the *professional* aspect of the officer corps, it is even more important to posit a concept of Joint Service Core Character Values.

The code that this paper is arguing for is more of a "creedal code" that portrays the "virtues of the ideal man (person) of arms."⁷⁶ It is not a question of whether one service approach is better than another, however, if there is such an entity as the joint profession of arms, then there should be one overarching formally published code of values. This code, recognized and accepted by each of the members of the joint armed forces, would then be the baseline from which the respective service codes could be derived. Each service should also highlight its peculiar traits, values, and conduct that best epitomize its own ethos while acknowledging the overarching code from the CJCS which reflects that which is expected of the ideal military officer.

This paper began with headlines supporting a belief that the military is "losing her moral bearings."⁷⁷ The Commandant of the Marine Corps has clearly stated that "outside the areas of morality and ethics," Marines are allowed and expected to "err in peacetime to ensure we do not err in combat."⁷⁸ The Commandant also stated that there is "no recovery" from an ethical or moral mistake because once made, the Marine (leader) has then lost the "moral authority to lead."⁷⁹ This strict interpretation has lead many Marines to believe that although the Commandant has stated on several occasions that the Marine Corps must eliminate the "zero defects mentality," many officers still see it as a condition that "permeates every level of

⁷⁵ Ibid., i.

⁷⁶ Fotion and Elfstrom, 78.

⁷⁷ Larson, 25 January 1996.

⁷⁸ Department of the Navy, Commandant of the Marine Corps, *The 31st Commandant's Planning Guidance*, 24.

⁷⁹ Krulak, 7 January 1998.

the Corps.⁸⁰ Joint core character values would not ensure that each service interprets, implements and enforces them the same way. Joint values would, however, help provide the necessary *professional* aspect to the joint *profession* of arms. It is through this professional bond that the respective services could ideally reach a common understanding.

The U.S. Air Force has certainly had its share of public attention surrounding the case with B-52 pilot First Lieutenant (1st Lt) Kelly Flinn and her sexual affair with an enlisted woman's husband. Charged with "lying, adultery and fraternization," she eventually received a general discharge due largely to public relations and media attention.⁸¹ In the shadow of the 1st Lt Flinn affair, General Joseph Ralston, Vice Chairman of the JCS, had to withdraw his name from consideration for the CJCS position due to "reports of an adulterous affair he had in 1984 while separated from his wife."⁸² At the time, some lawmakers viewed the General Ralston and 1st Lt Flinn situations as indicative of a double standard that exists in the U.S. Air Force and the Department of Defense based on how the two situations were handled. Recently, however, Army General Hugh Shelton, Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen, and the President have all seen that General Ralston "has performed with extraordinary skill...and it would be great if he could stay" on as the Vice CJCS "for the next two years."⁸³

The above discussion is intended to depict the apparent disparity in which the respective services, and in fact the Department of Defense, address different ethical situations. Another contemporary case involves the dismissal and subsequent return to the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA) of Andrea L. Houk. Dismissed for violating the Cadet Honor Code of the USAFA by lying, Houk was eventually re-instated after accepting full responsibility and being held accountable for her actions.⁸⁴ As a result of her actions, she not only accepted responsibility and was held accountable, but she arrived at some poignant revelations:

⁸⁰ Jon R. Anderson, "Plan to Overhaul Officer Promotions," *Navy Times: Marine Corps Edition*, 8 December 1997, 4.

⁸¹ "1997 in Review," *Navy Times: Marine Corps Edition*, 5 January 1998, 10.

⁸² "1997 in Review," *Navy Times: Marine Corps Edition*, 5 January 1998, 22.

⁸³ "Vice Chairman Gets Another Term," *Navy Times: Marine Corps Edition*, 19 January 1998, 2.

⁸⁴ Andrea L. Houk, "The Honor Principle," *Newsweek*, 12 January 1998, 14.

1. Integrity should be the pillar on which everything else in the military rests.
2. Members of the Armed Forces should be held to a higher standard because it would be impossible to "protect and defend the Constitution" in good faith if "we" were not.
3. In a time when the military is under close scrutiny and is often in the public eye for negative incidents, it is easy to forget that the vast majority of servicemen and women hold themselves to a higher standard of morals than the few who make the headlines.⁸⁵

Houk credits former Secretary of the Air Force Sheila Widnall for being the type of leader that "saw something in [her] that warranted the chance to try again."⁸⁶

The following historical example in no way condones immoral or unethical behavior, however, it does serve to make one wary of such cut-and-dry or black-and-white perspectives. General of the Army Douglas MacArthur is reputed to be "the most gifted man-at-arms this nation has produced."⁸⁷ His life was not, however, one that was always of "pure and scrupulous morality."⁸⁸ For example, following his first marriage which ended in divorce, he began a relationship with a sixteen year old girl in the Philippines, and brought her to Washington, D.C. Eventually, there were various scandals, threats of embarrassment and damage to his career, which resulted in her being sent back to the Philippines. She eventually moved to California and finally committed suicide in 1960.⁸⁹ The point to this example is to question what the war in the Pacific during World War II would have been like had General MacArthur's career been terminated over his ethical mistake. Fortunately, his reputation and credibility, along with leadership in Washington who recognized his potential, allowed for him to recover and continue leading soldiers.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ David W. Lutz, "The Exercise of Military Judgment: A Philosophical Investigation of the Virtues and Vices General Douglas MacArthur," *JSCOPE XIX* presentation, downloaded from *Sprynet* (usafa.af.mil/jscope/Lutz97.htm), 25 November 1997.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

It is obvious that based largely on the "special trust and confidence" placed on military officers by the people of the United States, military professionals should be held to a higher standard than society. Additionally, it has been shown that errors in judgment, whether honest mistakes or ethical or moral ones, can be recovered from assuming the presence of responsibility and accountability. Based on the situations described above, as well as actual cases from several boards of inquiry cited by the Commandant of the Marine Corps, the dominant factor in whether or not an officer could recover from an ethical mistake appears largely to be a question of willful and calculated intent.⁹⁰ This deliberate intent is opposed to acts stemming from extreme circumstances. One researcher noted three general guidelines dealing with ethical conduct of military officers.

1. Develop a high standard of honor and guard it jealously.
2. Accord legitimacy to all laws and regulations and insist on conformity.
3. Accept the reality of situational ethics and understand it.⁹¹

On one hand, the Commandant of the Marine Corps states that "there is no room for situational ethics in the Marine Corps;" however, based on the experiences of U.S. Air Force cadet Andrea L. Houk, one attribute of a good leader is to recognize potential or ability to recover.⁹² It is important to note as well that the Commandant of the Marine Corps' views on recovery from an ethical violation are quite clear as previously stated. Conversely, retired U.S. Air Force Gen Perry M. Smith, author of *Taking Charge: A Practical Guide for Leaders*, wrote that "by admitting failure early on," leaders "can often put it behind" and continue to lead.⁹³ He additionally states that "individuals who have reached high leadership positions

⁹⁰ Krulak, 7 January 1998.

⁹¹ William M. Dalton, Lt Col, USAF, *Morality, Duty and the Professional Military Officer* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 28 February 1972), 17.

⁹² Department of the Navy, Commandant of the Marine Corps, *The 31st Commandant's Planning Guidance*, 24.

⁹³ Perry M. Smith, *Taking Charge: A Practical Guide for Leaders* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 67.

without one or two major setbacks in their careers are often not well equipped to handle failure and heavy criticism."⁹⁴

The preceding discussion begs the question of just exactly where and at what point should the line be drawn? Perry Smith cautions leaders by focusing on integrity as being an Achilles' heel of sorts with respect to an institution (or leader/officer). If an officer, leader, or institution is committed to integrity, both personal as well as institutional, i.e., "if [they] talk about it, write about it, mean it, and live it," then the organization's overall integrity "will remain high."⁹⁵ The caution deals with when leaders appear not to be concerned with integrity and "allow the rules to be bent," they then risk the integrity of the institution.⁹⁶ Appropriate exercise of a leader's (military officer's) judgment is the key.

Responsibility, Accountability, and Credibility

Responsibility and *accountability* are resident elements in each of the four proposed core character values. Although viewed by many as synonymous, there are subtle yet clear differences. Responsibility, as defined by Webster is "moral, legal, or mental accountability."⁹⁷ Accepting responsibility for ones actions, morally, legally, and mentally, is the first step toward recovery from any type of mistake. By accounting for one's actions, one should then be able to directly face and deal with the issue, and be willing to accept the moral, legal, and emotional consequences. In other words, once responsibility has been fully accepted, in actions as well as words, the next step is to be held accountable.

One element of Richard A. Gabriel's proposed leadership model for military personnel, noted previously, spells out moral responsibility as one of four general features.⁹⁸ Other non-military professional organizations espouse responsibility as a key element of their

94 Ibid., 67.

95 Perry M. Smith, *Taking Charge: A Practical Guide for Leaders* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1986), 107.

96 Ibid., 107.

97 *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, under the word "responsibility."

98 Gabriel, 24.

professional codes. The American Bar Association's Code of Professional Responsibility, and the American Medical Association's Principles of Medical Ethics of the A.M.A., both link the professional with being responsible and trustworthy. It is obvious that responsibility and trust are viewed as essential to not just military leadership, but to esteemed civilian professionals as well. It is also important to note that although codes exist to guide the members of a profession, there will always be differing interpretations of the spirit and intent of the codes as opposed to the written words of the codes. This is where leaders within the various professions are called upon to apply both their objective as well as subjective judgment.

Accountability, the other element that is a necessary ingredient to leadership and recovery from mistakes, refers to being "subject to giving an account" or being "answerable" for ones actions or inaction. The Commandant of the Marine Corps emphasizes this essential element in stating that accountability "hurts" and it "is a must."⁹⁹ General Ronald R. Fogleman, then U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff, expressly linked standards and accountability by emphasizing that standards should be "uniformly known, consistently applied and non-selectively enforced," and that "accountability is critically important to good order and discipline."¹⁰⁰ He goes on to describe its importance to the American people in that failure to ensure accountability would destroy the public's trust. This is key to the whole argument about accountability based on General Fogleman's view that the oath military personnel take to support and defend the Constitution requires them to "embrace and live by the standards that are higher than those in the society we serve."¹⁰¹

Closely related to this discussion regarding responsibility and accountability is credibility, otherwise known as the "cornerstone" of leadership.¹⁰² Defined as referring to "how leaders earn the trust and confidence of their constituents," credibility is essential for an officer to

⁹⁹ Krulak, 7 January 1998.

¹⁰⁰ Department of the Air Force, United States Air Force, *Air Force Standards and Accountability*, downloaded from *Sprynet* (<http://www.usafa.af.mil/core-value/accountability.html>), 3 January 1998.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993), cover flap.

effectively lead his or her soldiers, airmen, sailors, or Marines.¹⁰³ Whether or not an officer can recover from an ethical or moral mistake is dependent on the ability of the individual to rebuild and subsequently regain his or her credibility. The key concept here is that credibility is rooted in reputation that is earned over time.¹⁰⁴ Likewise, it will take time to regain lost credibility. Assuming trust and confidence of one's constituents can be regained, then it could be argued that credibility can also be rebuilt. If this is the case, then leaders should be able to focus on character development vice ending an officer's career over an ethical mistake.

In order to regain lost credibility, it is essential for an officer, or any leader for that matter, to consciously decide that rebuilding lost confidence and trust is of paramount importance not just to the individual, but to the institution. Once committed, the "six A's of leadership accountability" provide a concise guide toward recovery.¹⁰⁵ These six steps are summarized as:

1. Accept personal responsibility.
2. Be willing to admit ones mistakes.
3. Offer an apology.
4. Act quickly to deal with immediate consequences of the mistake.
5. Make amends.
6. Remain attuned to the influence ones actions are having on restoring lost credibility.¹⁰⁶

In the case of General Ralston, the question of accountability, if based on reported stories, may not have clearly met the criteria of the above guide. It is possible, however, to be held accountable to varying degrees, and it would then be up to the officer's commander to determine adequacy of accountability along with potential for future service. It is important to note that following this road map to recovery is not the only way or the only answer.

¹⁰³ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993), xvii.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 25.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 204.

¹⁰⁶ James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993), 204-205.

Leaders in America can typically make one or two mistakes, however, the old adage "three strikes and you're out" appears to hold true.¹⁰⁷

Finally, several authors call out the concepts of *duty*, *honor*, and *country* as being foundations of all officer PME. Anthony Hartle considers *duty* as incorporating obedience and self-discipline, and *honor* as that virtue that "connotes integrity vice military glory or prestige."¹⁰⁸ He goes on to describe *country* as "the object to which the performance of duty and maintenance of honor are devoted," allegiance to which "is constrained by conceptions of morality and 'guided by an overwhelming commitment to constitutional process.'"¹⁰⁹ When considering the context of these three concepts, he goes on to suggest the emergence of four additional principles that are fundamental to American PME:

1. Professional competence.
2. Civilian control of the military.
3. The professional military officer is above politics in domestic affairs.
4. Welfare of the soldier.¹¹⁰

The proposed Joint Services Core Character Values encompass not only the concepts of *duty*, *honor*, and *country*, but are in keeping with highest traditions or as General Douglas MacArthur called it, "the ethics of the American soldier."¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 205-206.

¹⁰⁸ Hartle, 47.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 49-50.

¹¹⁰ Hartle, 50 -51.

¹¹¹ Peter L. Stromberg, Malham M. Wakin, and Daniel Callahan, *The Teaching of Ethics in the Military* (Hastings-on-Hudson, NY: Institute of Society, Ethics and the Life Sciences, 1982), 19.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Higher Standard for Military Officers

This chapter will bring together the salient issues raised and link them to the thesis. The first point of this research endeavor was to consider whether or not the military officer should be held to a higher standard than society. The author concurs with the emphatic answer to this question given by General Charles C. Krulak when he said "absolutely!"¹¹² This issue, however, deserves discussion.

Richard Gabriel refers to the "soldier's awesome tasks and responsibilities."¹¹³ The gravity of this statement, when combined with the view of Samuel Huntington, is very clear. Huntington describes the professional military ethic as "pessimistic, collectivist, historically inclined, power-oriented, nationalistic, militaristic, pacifist, and instrumentalist," or more briefly, "realistic and conservative."¹¹⁴ He additionally compares the judgment and capacity for the application of ethical standards by statesmen and soldiers as being equal. Regardless of this apparent equality, the soldier, through the virtue of military obedience, is required to obey the statesman as part of his duty to the state. Huntington clears up this dilemma by noting that "as a soldier, he owes obedience; as a man, he owes disobedience."¹¹⁵ Certainly, the grave implications and consequences of fully understanding this moral responsibility, or

¹¹² Krulak, 7 January 1998.

¹¹³ Gabriel, 24.

¹¹⁴ Huntington, 79.

¹¹⁵ Huntington, 78.

more importantly, knowing when to apply such ethical action is an awesome calling. This rationale supports the need to hold military officers to a higher standard than society.

Errors in Judgment...Character Development

The second issue that helped frame this research effort was whether errors in judgment of an ethical nature by military officers, and the recovery therefrom, should be automatically viewed as career ending or might they be useful in the officer's overall character development. Given the current climate within the military of shrinking personnel and financial assets, increased (or at least sustained) operational tempo, and mass media attention involving immorality and gender training issues, the system appears ripe for disaster over any type of mistake. The issue of recovery from an ethical mistake is relevant to this paper's primary goal in that it illustrates the wide disparity within the U.S. Armed Forces leadership concerning where to draw the line.

The U.S. Marine Corps stands firmly on one side of the issue resolved to terminate an officer's career over a character related mistake rather than allow for the possibility of recovery. The U.S. Air Force, on the other hand awarded a general discharge to an officer when, by most accounts, the officer could have been tried for fraternization, lying, and adultery. The U.S. Air Force also overturned the dismissal of a U.S. Air Force Academy cadet for violating the school's honor code, by allowing her to return to the academy. Finally, largely due to congressional and media attention, General Ralston was forced to withdraw his bid for the CJCS position due to admitting to a sexual affair he was involved in 1984. Although not allowed to perform as the CJCS, he has not only been allowed to remain as the assistant, but has been requested to continue in that position for the next two years.

As to the question of whether an officer should be allowed to continue after an ethical mistake, the majority view is favorable. Although the Commandant of the Marine Corps would not agree, there appears to be substantial support for recovery assuming certain criteria have been met. The three steps that make up this criteria revolve around responsibility,

accountability, and credibility. First, the officer must accept full responsibility for the mistake, and in doing so, also face whatever consequences arise as a result of the infraction. By accepting ownership of the action and consequences, the second step is that of accountability. It is essential that the officer be held accountable for all action and inaction relative to the mistake. The key here is that there can be different levels and types of accountability, and it is up to the officer's commander to determine what is appropriate.

Finally, credibility is the crux of the entire recovery process. As noted in the previous chapter, credibility is earned over time, but can be lost in an instant. The conscious decision of the officer to work at regaining lost credibility is only the beginning of the process. Commitment to following the "six A's of leadership accountability" referred to in Chapter 5 will put the officer in good stead to being able to fully rebuild his lost reputation.¹¹⁶

Joint PME Education and Joint Core Character Values

The awesome responsibilities and moral character required for the leadership of the U.S. Armed Forces demands that clear and concise guidance from the CJCS be provided for establishing a joint concept of PME education as well as a published set of Joint Services Core Character Values. Although generally presented and discussed in Joint Pub 1, the professional character of the joint U.S. profession of arms is not complete without a formally published, recognized, and accepted set of ethical principles or core character values. Not intended to ensure uniformity within each of the respective services, the proposed joint core character values serve to establish a foundation and emphasize the *professional* aspect of the joint armed services.

The rift within the joint armed services created by the disparate application of ethical standards clearly lends support for this joint approach. The key to unlocking the service biases toward this joint PME education concept is understanding that it is necessary to

¹¹⁶ Kouzes and Posner, 204-205.

maintain the unique character of the respective service institutions in terms of the peculiar functions they each play in the joint arena. One example of this unique almost sacrosanct character is best summed up by Lieutenant General Victor H. Krulak, U.S. Marine Corps, retired, in the following:

"We exist today--we flourish today--not because of what we know we are, or what we know we can do, but because of what the grassroots of our country believes we are and believes we can do....The American people believe that Marines are masters of a form of unfailing alchemy which converts unoriented youths into proud, self-reliant stable citizens--citizens into whose hands the nation's affairs may safely be entrusted....and, likewise, should the people ever lose that conviction--as a result of our failure to meet their high--almost spiritual--standards, the Marine Corps will quickly disappear."¹¹⁷

Although referring to the Marines, there are relationships and analogies with the other services that apply as well.

In order to maintain the military's unique character, it is recommended that the services, with the CJCS guidance, continue their respective character/ethics/morals education programs and that they be consistent with the following:

1. PME education should follow a "cradle-to-grave" approach in that it continues throughout the officer's career.
2. Character development and consistent leadership should be the focus.
3. The entire education process should be continuously evaluated for relevance and currency.
4. The proposed Joint Service Core Character Values should be formally published, recognized, and accepted as the baseline from which the professional character of the joint armed services emanates.
5. Aside from the respective service's core values and principles, the proposed Joint Service Core Character Values should be taught and emphasized as the overarching theme.

¹¹⁷ Krulak, 7 January 1998.

Table 7 identified the proposed Joint Services Core Character Values to be adopted by the CJCS. These values will serve to provide the overarching concept of ethics and moral guidance, or specifically, a moral compass for the U.S. Armed Forces. The essential themes that must be present at every turn are those of *responsibility*, *accountability* and *credibility*. Mistakes will occur, and failure will manifest itself at the most inopportune times. Whether errors in judgment, choice, or follow-through, human frailties will always be a part of any organization.¹¹⁸ Although the human factor will continuously be an issue, the higher standards to which American military officers must be held will remain the driving force in ensuring the nation's continued trust and confidence.

Additional Issues Recommended for Future Study

As noted in the Forward and in Chapter 1, the amount of information available regarding virtually every aspect of ethics, morality, and in particular professional military ethics, is overwhelming. This section is meant to guide future study in related areas of interest.

With respect to when officer education actually begins, some would argue that basic training or Officer's Candidate School is the first introduction. Others, on the other hand, view the entire college education process a part of growing and maturing the future officer and consequently that is where their education and training begins. Regardless of the origin, informal discussions with two Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) instructors indicated that there really is no effort to educate officers in ethics and morality prior to basic training. The potential need for this type of education at the ROTC's and Junior ROTC's, prior to actually pinning on those gold bars, would be an ideal area to concentrate on for future study.

Another area of focus would be on civil-military relations, and how the higher standards expected of military officers affects the perceptions of the civilian polity. There have been

¹¹⁸ Kouzes and Posner, 203.

many books and articles on this topic, and Congressman Ike Skelton, (D) Missouri, has recently expressed his concerns on this issue during a lecture at the Federal Bureau of Investigation Academy, Quantico, Virginia on 19 November 1997.

In closing, it would be prudent to re-state that jointness is unavoidable and every service should be going out of their way to ensure smooth transitions and fully integrated ethics guidance from the CJCS. As professional military officers, while some may be born with an innate leadership ability, most have to continuously fine-tune the many traits leaders espouse. In a similar vein, moral behavior is not just something people show up with, but is learned through practice and habit. As practitioners of war, that most basic yet brutal aspect of the human condition, professional military officers have a moral obligation to not just practice ethical conduct, but to teach it as well.

APPENDIX A

EDITED TRANSCRIPT OF PERSONAL INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL CHARLES C. KRULAK, COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

Date of Interview: 7 January 1998

Location of Interview: Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Washington, D.C.

Background: General Krulak was provided with the following research questions and discussion points on 6 January 1998, via electronic mail, in order to focus the interview:

1. Should military officers be held to a higher standard than society, i.e., more pure than the polity?
2. Should errors in judgment of an ethical nature by military officers, and the recovery therefrom, be viewed as career ending, or might they be viewed as character building?
3. Is there a need for a joint education approach to professional military ethics and standards of conduct for today's military officers?
4. The Commandant's Planning Guidance (CPG) indicates in the section titled "People" that Marines should be allowed and even encouraged to make mistakes "outside the areas of morality and ethics" as long as they learn from them, and press on to accomplish the mission. My question is that staying away "situational ethics," assuming responsibility and accountability, and not in any way encouraging or condoning unethical or immoral behavior, shouldn't Marines be afforded the same opportunity to learn from those mistakes and press on with the mission?
5. If the answer to question 4 is "yes," then couldn't the CPG direction in this area be made more clear?
6. If the answer to question 4 is "no," then (assuming responsibility and accountability have been addressed) how can we "remove the last vestiges of a 'zero defects' mentality?"
7. In proposing a joint concept for professional military ethics education as well as a joint code or set of joint core values, couldn't this be accomplished by focusing on the common threads that are stated in the respective service codes and core values while still maintaining the high standards and "ethos" that each respective service brings to the joint environment?

Transcript

General Krulak: "I've done a little study of my own...I sent an e-mail to my general officers. It says in short:

'Let me highlight some issues of the past year and provide some thoughts...' My first bullet talks about

‘warfighting.’ My second bullet says ‘our Corps exists to win our nation’s battles. All programs and initiatives must link back to this core thought. Speak of this often. Marines, our civilian leadership, and our countrymen and women must think about...America’s legion. They must have faith that if committed, their Corps of Marines will win. We are special. In my travels, I often hear that ‘the Commandant has raised the bar regarding standards.’ It is normally said as a complaint. I’d love to take credit for doing that, but it would not be true. We have always had our standards. They have been unwavering. They have always been high. They have always commanded the respect and admiration of our countrymen and women. They have always been part of our ethos. They are part of the concept of America’s legion. Most importantly, they are what the Nation expects of their Corps of Marines. We are going to stay the course. We are not going to fall off of what our predecessors fought so hard to give us. Accountability hurts! But it is a must. I need your continued support in this area. Accountability is a must!”

Should military officers be held to a higher standard than society?

General Krulak: “The answer is absolutely! If you want to read a whole book about why, you should read James B. Stockdale’s *Ten Years of Reflection*...Goethe once wrote that ‘you limit a man’s potential by appealing to what he is, you must appeal to what he might be.’ As America’s Corps of Marines, we can’t appeal to what is the standard of our own citizens, we must appeal to what we can be, which is higher than that. And we must, and we always have. Not Chuck Krulak, not you, not Chesty Puller, not anybody. That’s who we are. We’ve always been that way. We’ve always set that standard. So the answer to the question is absolutely!”

Should errors in judgment of an ethical nature by military officers, and the recovery therefrom, be viewed as career ending, or might they be viewed as character building?

General Krulak: “I will tie that right now to my CPG where I said ‘I expect Marines to epitomize that which is good about our nation and to personify the ideals upon which it was founded. I do not intend for honor, courage, and commitment to be just words. I expect them to frame the way we live and act as Marines. There is no room in the Corps for situational ethics or situational morality. Those found wanting will be held accountable. I want to be absolutely clear that outside the areas of morality and ethics, Marines can make mistakes as long as they learn from those mistakes and move on to accomplish their mission. In areas not involving character, we must

continue to work to remove the last vestiges of a zero defects mentality...we must be allowed to err in peacetime to ensure we do not err in combat. We will not be able to survive if we do otherwise.' That's not a contradiction! That was written by Chuck Krulak exactly that way, because in fact...let me just go through and you to tell me who you want to learn a lesson from. Let's start right here..."

{General Krulak then related several actual cases from his file of Boards of Inquiry (BOI) completed on Marine officers over the last several years. As he reviewed several cases, he posed several questions to the author: "Do we keep [him/her]? Do you want to keep [him/her] Commandant? Does the institution want to keep [him/her]?" In almost every case, the said named officer (SNO) had expressed sorrow, remorse, regret, and promised to change his/her ways. The Commandant then expressed concern about the "message" that we send our Marines by retaining these officers. He also questioned the officer's future promotion potential, as well as the "\$30,000.00" the Marine Corps would have to pay in possible separations pay when the officer fails selection. Examples of the cited cases are:

- Adulterous affair, while deployed, with Marine NCO's wife
- Fraternization and improper sexual relations with several enlisted Marines in quarters on multiple occasions
- Numerous domestic disturbances, improper sexual relations with corporal in same unit, and separate adulterous affair three years earlier
- Child pornography via the Internet and in town
- Adultery, fraternization, and indecent exposure during major exercise
- Rape of an adolescent girl
- Illegal and inappropriate use of an Internet home page
- SNO, married, living with wife of other Marine officer
- Lying about weight, and falsifying official records
- Obstructing official investigation
- Providing alcohol to underage Marines in SNO's quarters, irresponsible use of a firearm, and assault
- Grand larceny, creating and submitting false official documents to command}

General Krulak "My point is, I meant exactly what I said. There is absolutely no place in the Marine Corps for somebody who violates and abdicates his moral authority to lead. Did I mean this? You're [darn] straight I did! There is no shade gray. If you lose your moral authority to be a leader, there is no place in the Corps. Contrary to what you read in the Navy Times, we've got people standing in line to be Marine officers. Do you think we

need to keep these pieces of garbage? We absolutely don't need to. If a guy goes out and gets drunk, drives his car into the battalion commander's lawn, [urinates] on his mail box...can we forgive him? Absolutely!"

{Change tape}

General Krulak: "If I'm the CO of First FSSG, or CO of 3/3, or CO of 31st MEU, and I've got somebody and I love him, and he's shoplifted, and he comes in and says 'God! I don't know why I did it. I mean...it was the dumbest thing I've ever done sir. I made a mistake!' And your heart goes out to him and you say 'God, he's learned his lesson. He's going to be so much better.' Step back! What signal do you send everybody who knows that the captain shoplifted? If you think you're sending a positive signal about zero defects mentality, you are absolutely not doing that! You're sending a signal of dual standards. You're sending a signal of...favoritism. Everything but what you're trying to send. **Moral turpitude! Once you violate it, you lose your moral authority to be a leader.** And you don't get it back! You may get it back in your little [darn] group, but you don't get it back! And it goes on your record. And if you think that in 1940 or the year 2000, any selection board [with the] authority to select Maj Krulak or Maj Schmuck, is going to pick Schmuck when he committed an offense of moral turpitude...guess what? They aren't going to do it. These guys aren't going to get promoted. Even the ones that are retained, they aren't getting promoted. And the only thing that happens is you and I pay for it. You don't get the ammunition you want. You don't get the training money you want. Because guess what, it all comes from a central pot of dollars. And if you pay somebody \$30,000.00 separations, it comes from somewhere. 30,000.00 bucks is one staff NCO that you're not going to be able to buy in your manpower...So to answer your question which is, 'Should errors in judgment of an ethical nature be viewed as career ending'...it's not a question of should--**they are career ending!** And if it's up to the Commandant, and if it's up to anybody that's got a [darn] sense at all, they are career ending! Cut and dry! Absolutely! We don't need them. We've got enough good officers...then why would you keep somebody who's lost his moral authority to lead? **There is no recovery!** There's not a selection in the Marine Corps--nor has there ever been one--that would say 'gee, this person was found guilty of screwing his company gunny's wife. Geez, I think...he's found guilty...he's paid his debt to humanity.' So we're going to promote him? Do you think there's a board that does that? There isn't!"

Is there a need for a joint educational approach to professional military ethics and a joint standard of conduct for today's military officer?

General Krulak: "I wish there could be. There won't be. Why won't there be? Because nobody else has got that..."

{Gestures at CPG and photocopied quote from *First to Fight*.}

General Krulak: "That is what nobody else has. Do you think that the Army, Air Force, or the Navy is going to go to my standards? Mine being the institution's? Are you [kidding] me? **Are you [kidding] me?"**

{General Krulak then diagramed an example of the U.S. Army's fraternization policy. In his example, a commanding general of one Army corps can have a sexual relationship with a junior enlisted soldier in a different Army corps. According to General Krulak, "that's legal in the Army...because they're not in the same corps...because they're not in the same chain of command."}

General Krulak: "You've just said...'can we have, or should we have, or will we be able to get a joint concept of ethics?' And I'm saying--**yes**--if they come to our concept They've got to get a [darn] erector set that can go six miles high and start jacking that sucker up, because they aren't anywhere near us! They're so far below it isn't funny. Why do you keep seeing the Marine Corps held up, particularly over the last few months, as the way to go? Because our standards are so high, and the American people are beginning to say 'this is where we're going.' Now we screw up...I mean we've got a lot of things going on right now that are nasty--that are going to break--that have broken. The issue is what happens when they break? Does the Marine Corps scurry around and try to cover up, or does the Marine Corps...say...'**OK?**' The Marine Corps goes after them with a **vengeance!** It says 'you've screwed up--you're going to be held accountable! **You are going to be held accountable!** That's why I said 'accountability hurts.' If you really mean it. If you really believe that you're going to hold people accountable, it hurts! So to answer your question, you've got a long way to go before you're going to get a joint concept of professional ethics--joint core values--joint anything. Because what you're saying is 'they've got to come to our standards! Now they may be willing to do that, but from what I've seen right now...just trying to fight the battles we're fighting...I don't see it happening. **They think that we're...too tough, and I'm saying...[good]!"**

{Addressed a joint concept of ethics education.}

General Krulak: "What is the ethical standard? Each of us, each Marine, private through four star must determine for themselves, in my opinion, what I call 'inviolate principles.' Inviolate principles! There are no

margins around your inviolate principles. I have articulated to the Corps what my inviolate principles are. I think that they have been inviolate since 1775. I think they are inviolate in all great leaders and leadership books you've ever read. And I've said 'we're not going to change that.' Just because society may does not mean that we will. And what we're doing with *transformation* is saying 'we recognize that society is changing faster than we could even imagine.' And that the values system within society...is changing dramatically. And so we're going to acknowledge that we can't change a person's values. We're going to acknowledge that I can't change [the values system of] a second lieutenant that's 22 years old, or a private that's 17 or 18. What I'm going to do, is...give them a new system,...and I'm going to hold them accountable to that system! If they cannot meet it, they're gone! And oh by the way, we're meeting and exceeding...reenlistment [goals]. All of this is [ridiculous]...is just that [ridiculous]! They aren't getting out...they're standing in line to stay in. I don't need to accept trash! If they don't want to meet our values, they're OUT! Now, our problem is that it takes a while to get them out--unfortunately. But that doesn't mean we...stop [trying]! We just keep on chugging. We keep on saying 'well it may take six months.' If I, General Krulak, can get it down to four months, I will. We're going to get at it!"

{Refers to BOI case binder.}

General Krulak: These are people that go before a board of officers. In '96, we were retaining almost 50%. Now in '97, that's really been cut. You think of what kind of [bad guys] there are,...look at the adultery cases, [and] fraternization. These are just the BOI. My point is...very similar to what my dad said, 'we exist because we win,' and because of the fact that we're 'America's legion.' The people think of us as 'America's legion.' We lose that--we lose either one of those--and we're down the tubes. Yesterday, I went up to the Naval Academy, and I gave a pitch to the leaders of the Naval Academy, West Point, the Coast Guard Academy, and the Air Force Academy. And an air force cadet, female, stood up and talked about this,...

{General Krulak referred to Andrea Houk's article in *Newsweek*.}

...because I raised the issue. And she said the honor board...at the United States Air Force Academy threw this girl out because she violated the honor code...that they voted unanimously to throw her out...that it was overturned by the Secretary of the Air Force."

{Discussed honor, integrity, and the importance of core values.}

{Change tape.}

{Final question regarding joint core values.}

General Krulak: Maybe the answer to your question is we should do it, and you strongly urge it. But you are worried of the reality of the illusion of one service's ethos vis-a-vis another's. And that is my fear. Not that we could do it, or should do it. I am petrified that as we go through the process the pressure will be to dilute the Marine Corps. To bring us down to somebody else's level, and I will tell you I won't do that! If I were directed to do it...I told the Secretary of the Navy, I told the Secretary of Defense...they know I will quit as the commandant. I will resign. I will retire immediately if they try to do several things. If they try to make us do gender integrated training, I will immediately tender my resignation. If they try to make moral turpitude or lessen our stance that's in the CPG...if they try to alter that, which is in my opinion the ethos of the Corps, then...I will quit! And I think, in fact I know, they'd be down probably to captains before they could find a Commandant that would stand up and sell the soul of the Corps. And that's what I think it would be--**selling the soul of the Corps!** And...believe me, once you've sold the soul of the Corps, I would say it would be 20 years and there would be no Corps. It would take about that long to the American people. You go through this book...

{Referred to *10 Years of Reflection*.}

...'Principle 10. Moral responsibility cannot be escaped. Whether you are a geneticist trying to unlock secrets of life and its creation, or a bureaucrat attempting to manipulate a nation's view of itself over time, you cannot use your profession as a shield for responsibility for your actions. A person is the sum of his deeds, and the responsibility for them rests squarely on his own shoulders. With this principle in mind, what then makes good leaders?' And what does he say? First, 'we all need to be moralists.' Holy mackerel! Do you understand that? And somebody questions the CPG? You're talking about moral courage and morality. 'You limit a man's potential by appealing to what he is, you must appeal to what he might be.' The bottom line is... what sets us apart as Marines is our standard. And when we don't meet them, we sell our institution short. That we, as an institution, can ill afford to have people who lack the moral turpitude to be Marines...there is no need to keep them. There's no necessity, in that as much as somebody reforms, quote-unquote, that reformation...needs to be put in the context of the institution. We're not talking about Christ forgiving a sinner...that's not what we're

talking about. We're talking about damage to an institution by accepting a lower standard. Long ago...you can see...

{Gestured at "Integrity" nameplate on his desk.}

...I don't have a name tag [on my desk]...every day...not because I'm a man of integrity, it's because I'm not a man of integrity. And I put that on my desk so every day I walk in I see that son-of-a-gun and I say 'I have got to do that!' Because...all of us sin and fall short of the mark. Whether you're Christian or non-Christian, you...aren't going to do well. So you better have something you can put your anchor on. I did it a long time ago by saying there are 'inviolate principles.'

{Referred to "Integrity" nameplate on his desk, and the CPG Core Values.}

They are so ingrained in me, that when something came up that goes against that inviolate principle, I just automatically said... 'no way!' Ding--the alarm goes off, and I said 'hey--no way!' I think the people that went before us in the Marine Corps did the same thing. [They] built a reputation that is articulated and I quote 'that has held us in good stead,' ...and to walk away from that is a mistake. I guess the bottom line is everything that I wrote in that Planning Guidance regarding moral turpitude I meant! Everything I said about eliminating all vestiges of zero defects mentality I definitely meant! You have no idea the number of books that have come across my desk that I've said 'go and do not sin anymore.' How many people I've promoted. How many people who have come in here and said 'Geez! Why does he get so [upset] about this and not about that?' Well one of [the reasons] has to do with moral turpitude. One of [the reasons] has to do with our ethos. Another has to do with a mistake made by a human [being]--that by letting them go, by letting them go back to their unit and say 'Hey! I was DUI,' 'I was this,' 'I was that,' ...'I've made a mistake. Let me tell you what I did...I've learned [from my mistake]...' There's a big difference between that and [saying] 'I screwed my platoon sergeant's wife, and now I'm really sorry...'"

{Discussed the CPG and how using the terms 'moral turpitude' could have lent additional clarity to the document.}

General Krulak: "'Morality' is the moral turpitude. I mean lying, cheating, stealing. Maybe I should have [included the terms 'moral turpitude' in the CPG]. The issue has to do with moral turpitude. The issue has to do with moral authority, and that's why I didn't use turpitude. Because the moral authority is derived from morality

and ethics. I've seen great leaders...in combat...a lot of guys my age who go to WESTPAC or go to Vietnam-- [who] have battalion commanders that [they] respected in combat...then [they] go on R&R and [the battalion commander would have sexual intercourse with many women]. And [you'd] been in his house with his family, and [I] can remember going back in-country and the moral authority to lead wasn't there. Was he a good commander? Was he a good combat leader? Yeah, but he never [again] had the moral authority to lead. The fact of the matter is that the guy never got promoted. **You have no idea the impact...how important your moral authority can be until you lose it.** It's the truth! Most people become commandant based on 33 years. I became commandant based on 54. I mean I lived this. I know. when people talk about...Chesty Puller--I used to eat breakfast with Chesty Puller. I used to eat breakfast with 'Howlin Mad' Smith...[he is] my Godfather. Don't tell me about the 'Old Corps.' They all lived in my house. When people say 'well, they never did this in the 'Old Corps'"--Don't tell me about that--I lived with them. I got half of who I am from these people who were quote 'wild men,' but were men of great character, and never lost their moral authority to lead. So the people that built the Corps--the John A. Lejuene's, the Lemuel C. Shepperd's, the 'Howlin Mad' Smith's--those people...were men of great character. My dad didn't just come up with this...

{Gestures at the reprint from *First to Fight*.}

...It came from what he observed. He was 'Howlin Mad' Smith's aide. He was Lem Shepperd's G-3. Like I told them yesterday at the Naval Academy, 'Don't question me on this.' I'm so right, it isn't funny! This is one you can take to the bank. I'm right! And when I depart as commandant, we will leave, with the Good Lord's blessing--and we pray to Him every day--with that same reputation in tact. In a time when we are under constant attack. I mean if you don't think we're under attack, you'd better wake up! We're under constant attack, and we've got a lot of good generals out there who are holding the line...

{Discussed examples such as USMC stance on gender based training.}

...I would think that most Marines, right now, would be walking around with swelled chests. That doesn't mean that tomorrow we're not going to have a disaster. Right now, as you and I talk, there's some kid doing something, believe me...

{Discussed various examples of what is likely going on throughout the Marine Corps, and how the American people expect the Marines to remain on top of the issues and up-front with the American public.}

{Wrap-up, picture, and thank you.}

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